

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04
NSAE-00 SIL-01 OES-07 DODE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 SP-02
/050 W

-----068601 011105Z /23

R 282343Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6105
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECON, ELAB, EFIN, EG
SUBJ: CIVIL SERVICE PAY INCREASE UNDER REVIEW

REF: (A) CAIRO 771, (B) 77 CAIRO A-06, (C) 76 CAIRO A-147

1. CAIRO PRESS GAVE WIDESPREAD COVERAGE FEBRUARY 27 TO DRAFT LEGISLATION TO IMPLEMENT LONG-AWAITED CIVIL SERVICE AND PUBLIC SECTOR PAY INCREASE. ACCORDING REPORT, PM SALEM WILL CHAIR CABINET SESSION FEBRUARY 28 REVIEWING PROPOSED LEGISLATION. KEY PROVISION OF DRAFT LAW INCLUDES INCREASES RANGING FROM 33 PERCENT IN LOWEST PAY CATEGORIES TO 22 PERCENT IN MIDDLE RANGE AND 10 PERCENT IN THE HIGHER PAY GRADES.

2. ONE REPORTED ASPECT OF DRAFT LAW IS PROPOSED INTRODUCTION OF MERIT PROMOTION SCHEME WHICH PROVIDES THAT MINISTRIES AND PUBLIC SECTOR AUTHORITIES ADOPT SYSTEM OF MERIT PROMOTION, PARTICULARLY WITHIN HIGHER GRADE LEVELS. PROPOSALS WILL ALSO RAISE STARTING SALARIES FOR UNIVERSITY GRADUATES FROM LE 25/MONTH TO LE 32/MONTH. NON-SALARY BENEFITS PRINCIPALLY INCLUDE ADJUSTMENT IN LEAVE PROVISIONS RAISING ANNUAL LEAVE FROM 30 TO 45 DAYS FOR EMPLOY-
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EES ABOVE 50 YEARS OF AGE; GRANTING WOMEN THREE MONTHS PAID MATERNITY LEAVE INSTEAD OF ONE MONTH; AND PROVIDING WOMEN EMPLOYEES MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT IN GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC SECTOR ENTITIES. LEGISLATION WILL ALSO ESTABLISH GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE TO HANDLE WORKERS' COMPLAINTS REGARDING PROMOTIONS, SALARIES, WORKING CONDITIONS, ETC.

3. COMMENT: STATE BUDGET FOR 1978 PROVIDES LE 150 MILLION FOR LONG-DELAYED PAY INCREASES. PROPOSED LEGISLATION APPEARS FIRST STEP IN MUCH NEEDED RESTRUCTURING OF ENTIRE CIVIL SERVICE SALARY SCHEDULE. NO GENERAL RAISE OF THIS MAGNITUDE HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED SINCE AT LEAST 1971, DESPITE HEAVY INFLATIONARY PRESSURES IN ECONOMY AND RAPIDLY RISING PRIVATE SECTOR WAGES. MOST RECENT COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT OF 12 PERCENT IN 1976 (REF B) APPLIED ONLY AT LOWER SALARY LEVELS. AS RESULT, EMPLOYEES IN UPPER CIVIL SERVICE GRADES HAVE PERHAPS SUFFERED DISPROPORTIONATELY. TIMING OF RAISES MAY BE CONNECTED WITH GOE CONCERN OVER POPULAR MALAISE THAT HAS SET IN AS PEACE EFFORT SEEMS STYMIED, BUT SALARY INCREASE UNQUESTIONABLY NEEDED TO OFFSET BURDEN INFLATION HAS PLACED ON GOE EMPLOYEES.

4. REGARDING UNIVERSITY GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT, MINECON EL SAYEH COMMENTED EARLY THIS YEAR TO VISITING CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION THAT GOE NO LONGER IS OPERATING AS "EMPLOYER OF LAST RESORT" BY GUARANTEEING JOBS TO EVERY COLLEGE GRADUATE. THIS POLICY HAS NOT BEEN PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED BY GOE, HOWEVER. EILTS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WAGES, LAW, GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CAIRO06493
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780093-0756
Format: TEL
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978025/aaaaadwv.tel
Line Count: 84
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9ec9f2d8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 CAIRO 771, 77 CAIRO A-6, 76 CAIRO A-147
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3580655
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CIVIL SERVICE PAY INCREASE UNDER REVIEW
TAGS: ECON, ELAB, EFIN, EG
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9ec9f2d8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014